PrideFlight

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**SUMMARY KEYWORDS**

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00:47

All right, well, we're back we are creating another episode of before we begin, I must share the Heartbreaker that was an hour earlier and day attempt. We created a whole hour long show. It was awesome. We had a lot of fun. It was a good one. It was a good one. And then I realized that I chose the wrong microphone source for Rachel. And so her voice didn't even get recorded. And because we were both speaking into the same microphone, the recording was completely echo we and sounded like we were in some sort of echo chamber. And so as a result, that whole hour long episode was ruined.

01:31

So here we are.

01:32

So here we are around to doing it again. And so today's show, we are going to be talking about a project that is near and dear to my heart called pride flight. And if you don't know what it is, you can go to pride flight.org which is the website or you can find pride flight on Facebook and learn a little bit about the project. So Rachel, do you know what pride flight is? Little bit so I'll tell you and then we can get right into it. So pride flight is an attempt by me as A pilot to fly a world war two era DC three around the globe to number one being the record books is the first openly gay pilot to circumnavigate the globe by air. And number two fly a goodwill mission, stopping at over 42 different locations across the globe and interacting with LGBT groups, organizations and communities worldwide to bring a spotlight to them that they otherwise may not have the opportunity to have. And so that's what that in essence is what pride flight is about. It is about a gay pilot trying to overcome a human obstacle which is flying a big metal tube with wings that spanned 95 feet around the world and it is going to be difficult, it is going to be dangerous, and it is going to be arduous. But if I don't kill myself in the process, then it would be worthwhile. And I'm going to try it and I want to tell you a little bit about the project when we come back, but I had this clip that I found on YouTube that I'm going to play so gives you a little bit of a little bit of an intro into the DC three, it's not very long, but it is kind of cool. So hold on and I'm going to play clip one

03:22

DC three, the plane that helped the airlines grow and taught the public to fly that helped win World War Two and lived on to perform service around the world today. Come meet that airplane, the DC three.

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Well, I know I told you it wasn't very long.

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But I have the whole clip. It's like a YouTube video and it's an hour long and that's just the beginning of it. So I'm going to try and play excerpts of it throughout the show and because there's some interesting tidbits but so you know, do you know what a DC three is? Are you familiar with the DC three?

03:54

Ah, not early.

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So the DC three was built by the McDonalds Was company in California a little bit before World War Two and it started out as a DC ones then they they started out as that DC one is the prototype and then there was a DC to could carry 14 passengers and then eventually the president of TWA his name was jack fry, he wanted a bigger, bigger airplane. So that could carry more passengers which would eventually make the airline profitable. And so they the latest and last iteration of the DC model was the DC three. And so it could carry I think 21 passengers. So you know, this airplane really is an icon of aviation and it ushered in an era where air travel became more affordable for the average American. So it really was, if you will, the parent of aviation of civilian aviation, and up until then trains were like the predominant form of travel and only the really wealthy could fly. And when they flew they flew airplanes that had three or more motors like the fortune Motor had three motors but uh, Mr. Douglas came up with this design, it had two engines twin engine airplane. And because of the large wingspan, it could carry a lot of weight and a lot of passengers. And so now people could, whereas it would take, you know, a very long time to cross country, they could actually cross United States in three days with three different three stops for fuel. So it really made the United States much more accessible to people. So that's the DC three. So there's a couple of fun facts about it. I'm going to read up a couple things. It was like 65 feet long, roughly had a 95 foot wingspan, and the cool thing is about it, it could carry a lot of cargo. You could stuff it with cargo, it had like eight, eight or 900 gallon fuel tank. I think some of the later versions of military versions had larger fuel tanks, but 900 gallons was a lot. It's a lot for an airplane of that time. Then, of course it had the three bladed propellers. by today's standards. It didn't fly very fast, you know about 200 knots do not much faster than a Cessna 172 or The Piper arrow that I fly was a single engine plane but back then that was pretty fast you know and that's what made it made airlines make money is because now they could carry more passengers for longer distances and you know cruise about 180 knots. You know, it flew it could fly up to 23,000 feet if it needed to but it wasn't pressurized, they didn't have oxygen. So most lights are pretty low because you have to fly below 10,000 feet and anything above 10 11,000 feet, the air gets too thin and and people would get hypoxia pass out die of course, you know. But anyway, so this is a really cool airplane. It's oftentimes been referred to as a pilots airplane, because it's very hardy, very sturdy, but you can't just let it go. You actually have to fly it you have to control the controls. It's it's a very mechanical aircraft, but it has heavy duty landing gear because it could land on unprepared fields, grass or dirt, not just paid runway. And that was you know, that was the benefit of it. That was the beauty of it. And then of course you know, we're we're to camera. And we all know well most of us know about World War Two history with no DC three or the military version, the C 47 was a workhorse for cargo and paratroopers during the war. So that's why I chose that plane because it could take a licking and keep on ticking. You know, it can fly into all sorts of runways, a 10,000 foot runway or 5000 foot dirt runway, it didn't matter. It can handle everything in between, and it's a hard airplane. So I chose that airplane. And then when we come back from this quick break, I'm going to tell you, first of all, how pride flight started, what the original concept and idea was for and how it came to be and then what's going on forward. So, so don't go anywhere. We will be back in just a moment. You're listening to the DJ Doran show

08:15

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09:01

You're listening to the DJ Doran show. Don't go away. We'll be right back. Call 312 to 352281 to speak to DJ.

09:14

All right, well, we're back. And that was interesting. So we're just trying to work out some sound issues. So hopefully it sounded okay. Anyway, we're back. We're talking about pride flight. That's what the topic of today's show. So I was telling Rachel BEFORE THE BREAK what a DC three is, and a little bit of history of the DC three. And so now we're going to talk about pride flight and how it came about and and why I think it's important. So many of you may or may not know, but I'm in publishing, so I own several publications. I'm also the president of the National equality media Association, and the managing director of Diversity Media. And so I'm very involved in LGBT media and in this day and age with President Trump in the White House. It is a very volatile, sometimes depressing, oftentimes controversial time to In media with LGBT or otherwise, for that matter, and a few years ago, I had purchased a local LGBT newspaper in Indianapolis, Indiana. And little did I know that there was a big controversy brewing, just you know, underneath the surface of what was going on there. So we purchased the publication in Indianapolis. And I convinced my partner now husband, Joe Morales, to pack up our things like The Beverly Hillbillies and made our way to Indianapolis, because I felt like I needed to be there to stutter. I need to be there to turn the paper around. Anyway, when we got there, what we realized is that Governor Mike Pence, now our Vice President, but the governor of Indiana back then had tried to push through this legislation called SB one on one which was very discriminatory towards LGBT sounds about right people. And so I was like, this can't stand so we were Joe and I were at a conference in Los Angeles and oh my god, the uproar was Yeah, was crazy. And people were telling everyone boycott Indiana, cancel your travel plans. Don't go to Indiana boycott Indianapolis. And it was very bad. And I finally at one point stood up and said please don't boycott Indiana or Indianapolis. I just bought a publication there. And you know, it's going to hurt me. You're going to hurt me, the people you're trying to protect, you're gonna hurt. So um, so after the conference, move back to Indianapolis. And there was a lot of uproar, and I met with Mike Pence and his wife Karen.

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Oh, did you? Oh,

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yeah. And believe me, he's nothing special to write home about. He's not very bright. And I realized right away that his wife is the power behind the throne. More than anything. There. She's the religious zealot. And he, you know, I'm sure they were, they have a secret closet in their house and you know, and he hangs from one of the hooks and she wears a leather outfit. I can almost guarantee that'll come out. But anyway, that's just my own opinion. I can picture it. Yeah, but anyway, he's a weird character, he has no lips, either he has a brow and he shakes hands like a like a limp fish. So, which is one of my pet peeves? Anyway, so I met him and and there was a lot of negativity towards the LGBT community in Indiana, especially and so a lot of backlash. Everybody had strong opinions, there was a lot of bickering, you know, and so forth. So I would come home and I would tell Joe is like, you know, there's got to be something positive that we can do. I mean, writing about what was happening in Indianapolis in Indiana at the time was depressing. And I'm not a huge fan of Indianapolis. I'll just say I'll put that right out there on the record on the record, but still, there was a lot of negativity. And so and I was trying to make a life there. We were trying to, you know, to get to know the community. We weren't from there. We didn't know anybody. We didn't. We weren't involved in the gay community. I tried to be active. So I went to bed one night, and I was thinking that was kind of praying heavy on my mind was what can I do? What can I do with the limited resources that I had, but using my skill set, you know, some people say, Oh, I'm going to volunteer, I'm going to do this or that. So I was like, What do I have in my tool bag that I could do that would be epic thing that would that would bring instead of the national focus being boycott Indiana and everyone saying how backwards Indiana was and how horrible Mike Pence was, and this and that, and nobody go there and just ostracize the state or the city. I couldn't figure it out. So I went to bed and I woke up suddenly in the middle of the night and I was like, I know what I want to do. And I wrote on a sticky fly around the world, and I stuck it to the screen of my computer and then I went back to bed. So the next morning I get up and I I'm talking to Joe for coffee, I said, I want to fly around the world. And he goes What? I said I want to fly around the world. And I said and I want to fly a DC three, he goes a TC three, what is that? And I said it's one of my favorite airplanes of all time, and I've always been one of my favorites and I said I want to fly DC three and he goes Never been heard of that. And we were talking and I told him what it was. It was a world war two era aircraft and it was older and so forth. But it was really cool airplane. And so he's like, yeah, yeah. So I started Googling DC threes for sale all over the world. They're all over the world. They still fly them a lot in South America too, by the way, they rely on them to fly into these local remote villages and, and towns to bring food and medical supplies to to the people that live there. And so after about, I don't know, two or three days of searching, I found one. I found one in encina, Mexico. And so I reached out to the the guy that owned it, and immediately made arrangements to fly to Cincinnati to see it. So a friend of mine at the time, and I bought some tickets, and we flew out there and saw the plane and I immediately fell in love and I could in my mind, I could envision what this plane would look like and how glamorous it would be to fly around the world and it would be such a head turner And there will be all this global support and blah, blah, blah, blah. Well,

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came back to United States. I told you I said, I found the plane and I'm going to write a contract for it. And he's like, what? We're going to keep it in all these different things. I said, Well, the good thing is, it's not ready to leave. It's not it's gonna take a while to get it ready to leave. And I don't give me time to raise the money goes, how you gonna raise the money? I said, Well, I've raised money before for real estate deals and other deals and and they were only asking 70,000 give or take a few thousand dollars for the airplane. I thought, How hard can that be? And I had seen a couple of other projects where they raised hundreds of thousands of dollars. And so I thought, you know, I'm going to create this project. the LGBT community is going to rally behind me, we're going to have a crowdfunding campaign people are going to donate $1 iF 70,000 people donate $1, I'll have the money I need and I'll raise all the money for the restoration and will have an army of volunteers and it'll be great. Everyone will come out They'll be photo ops and everyone will be excited though, you know the plane will fly in or make a big media splash, etc, etc, etc. I'm the publisher of a local LGBT newspaper, I can put it on the front page. And that's going to get all this attention. And I mean, I just went in my mind I went cuckoo, cuckoo Cuckoo. And I did. I wrote a story, I put the picture of the plane on the front page of the newspaper, I went to one of the most popular gay bars and I gave a speech about pride flight and what it was going to take and all of this and I named the plane the bag lady as our local drag organization in Indianapolis that does terrific work and raises a ton of money for the community. The founder of the bag lady Gary bracket, aka Cadillac Barbie, you know is the founder of the gay pride parade in Indianapolis. deservedly so the parade is named after him. And, and so it's Cadillac Barbie Pride Parade. He and I would sit down and we would talk and I decided I'm gonna named the plane the bag lady. Because bag lady in essence was back like a vagabond, the actual definition of it. And in essence, that's what the plane was going to do. She's going to travel across the world as a vagabond country to country to country, no real home, but just travel around. So I paid some money and had a character made using the founder of the bag ladies blossom. And I proceeded to announce to the world pride flight, I got a little bit of press in some of the other newspapers around the country, but in general, I was in Indianapolis. We created a social media, we created a website, I got some volunteers. And then we created a crowdfunding campaign on Kickstarter, which I'm sure you're familiar with, right? So this is what my thought is. I'm going to launch the Kickstarter. Yeah, I use some students from a local university to create the Kickstarter video. It looked pretty good. It wasn't great, but it looked pretty good. And I thought to myself, Oh, man, I'm gonna get you know, we're gonna raise this money by noon right. The anticipation was is awesome. Everybody was psyched up we had we were ready to do it, we launched the Kickstarter campaign. Nothing, nothing, an hour goes by nothing. Two hours go by nothing. The whole day goes by nothing. The second day nothing and you know, you can only Kickstarter is a 30 day 30 day thing, and it's all or nothing. So we were trying to raise $100,000 right 100,000 was going to buy the plane and then affect some of the repairs so we could get it back the United States and I thought, Okay, the first couple of days people just getting to know it's being shared, you know, we were sharing it on our social media, etc, etc, etc. And by the 10th day, we had like $8. And I mean, we spent a lot of money and a lot of time creating a Kickstarter campaign that I thought was pretty good. And in the end, I'm going to cut right to the chase. We didn't raise anywhere near the money that we needed that the crowdfunding completely failed the people in the LGBT community and part of the pride organization took to social media and made fun of the fact that I didn't raise any money and blah, blah, blah, you know, just very unsupportive. And and so it was a big failure and a big humbling experience for me. But it didn't stop there, it got worse. So then I had to tell the guy that had the plane, you know, I had to keep stalling him, I kept stalling him, kept stalling him and kept stalling him. And he was fine. Because I thought to myself, you know, how many buyers of DC threes are there, so it's going to sit for a while to give me time to recover. Lo and behold, somebody showed up and bought the plane.

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And it was devastating. Because, you know, this was like, the universe was like, this plane is right here. It's easy for me to get to. It's everything I needed. And it was taken out of my hand. And so um, so I reached out to the guy who bought the plane and I started talking to him. He's a very nice guy, and I said, Hey, would you be interested in letting me fly You're playing for my project and I will pay for the restoration. I'll raise some money to pay for the restoration. I'll fly the plane and I'll promote your organization and his organization is very worthy organization. They find missing servicemen, you know, that have been that crashed, and have their bodies have never been recovered. Gotcha. So and I wasn't really expecting anything. And then all of a sudden he sent me an email and said, Yes, I'll do it. You can use my plane. Well, the problem, there's multiple problems, the contract by the plane was very convoluted. There was a lot of issues between him in the cellar, and I try to act as a mediator to get things resolved and get the plane and all the while I still couldn't raise the money because part of raising money for a project like this is people don't believe you're going to do it. Yeah, until you have some sort of physical thing that they can touch. So my whole thought was, if I can get the plane and then people see the plane Then I could, so I was gonna, I was going to try and raise the money to buy the plane. And then once I had the plane, I'd raise the money to fly the mission separately, right? So I knew that having the plane was critical. Having the plane was critical. I thought, okay, I'll have the plane through the sky. And then I can say, technically, I have the plane, and then I would raise the money. It just didn't work. I mean, just life doesn't work that way. You know, you some, it just doesn't work. There was so many obstacles, there was so many challenges, the time it took to mediate the issues between the seller and the buyer, the time it took to mediate the issues between two countries to figure out what is needed to get the plane across the country because you can't just fly across the border. Nope, you know, and on top of that, this plane had a lot of issues. You know, there were possible corrosion issues until there was you know, now it was okay, it's another $20,000 to pull the wings off to do a corrosion inspection and then a fee for this a fee for that a fee for this feature. For that a bride here, this neck was a ton of money. And I didn't have that. And so, you know, I'm trying to run my own business, which is having a difficult time at the time as well. So long story short, the plane just languished. It's still in Mexico. Oh, damn. Yeah. So it's it's getting further along, but it's still there. Yeah. So and then we all know, when when you use somebody else's stuff, there are always strings. Yeah. Right. And there were legitimate. But they were there, but they were there. And I was like, that's not what I wanted. Because I wanted to have total control so that if I was in, I'll just say, Chittagong in India, right. And I decided, hey, I want to stay here for a bit and I want to assist the local LGBT community or group there. And so I'm going to instead of being here for two days, I'm going to be here for a month. Yeah. I don't want to have to ask permission for that. You know, other than normal from the government, but I didn't want to say I didn't want someone else saying hey, you need to go I promised that we're going to have a media of At this next thing, you know what I mean all I felt like I didn't have the control. You didn't have autonomy, autonomy. So I was I was not very happy. Like I wasn't really happy. So after a while, I just backed out and I said, I'll just find my own plane. And, and I there's a weird sense that I'm not done with this plane yet that you know, the way the universe works it's it's like real estate, you know, in real estate, they have returned most big deals die two or three times before you close. Hmm. I kind of think that this is what this is, is this deals going to go back and forth a few times and and maybe whatever. And I am a big believer that even if you don't know what the outcome is, you show up every day. Oh, yeah, you just show up. And that's what I'm trying to do right now. So ultimately, ultimately, pride flight will happen whether it's in a DC three or another airplane. I don't know yet, but I'm moving forward. I'm just taking steps forward. I figured that's going to reveal itself. So a lot of people ask me, you know why Why do you want to take on a project like this? This is seems like just a lot of work? And my answer is anything worthwhile is going to be a lot of work. And if it was easy, everybody would do it. You know, I mean, everybody wants to be a millionaire, but you got to work at it, you know, you got to be there, you got to try it. And whether it's whether it's a project like this or anything else, I myself always do my very best and give my all whether I succeed or fail is almost secondary. I try. I'm trying. And and I don't know all the answers, you know, because, you know, people often say to me, oh, what about this? Or what about that? Or what about this? And I'm, and there are times when I have to say, I don't know what that answer is? No, I'll figure it out. But I'm moving forward, still figuring I'm still figuring it out. And maybe I won't do it. Maybe I'll never be able to do it. I don't know. I don't know that. But maybe I will. I don't know that either. So So that's kind of what I'm doing with with pride flight at the moment is I'm just moving forward. Now my vision of what I think it is, and probably how it's going to end up being maybe different, but my the way I think it is right now is is I get this plane, I energize the community, the local LGBT community where I live now, Chicago, Chicago land area, and we get the plane here. And a lot of people come out and they invest their time and they help clean it up and do whatever we can do that doesn't violate any FAA requirements. We get volunteers to help with the engines to help with the systems to make sure that it's as safe as it can be. We get corporate sponsors to pay for the fuel and all of the other fees that are going to be involved. And then I give up my time to fly it. And, you know, this airplane is an icon of aviation. You know, it It changed and revolutionized the way air travel was done when it became on the scene. You know, it was it was built by the McDonnell Douglas company and in California, Southern California. And, you know, a couple of the luminaries from the airlines went to to Mr. Douglas and said, Hey, we want you to build us this plane, we need to, we need to carry more passengers so that we be we can become profitable, nice to go this far these to do this and that and gave all these parameters, but we want three engines, because that's what they were used to. And the engineers and the designers at the McDonnell Douglas plant in California came up with this radical airplane design that could accomplish all those things with two engines. And, and this is a testament to the engineering skills of that team because that airplane is still flying today at five years later, and still reliable for the most part. And so I chose it because I wanted a hardy sturdy, tough, forgiving airplane that could handle just about anything that the circumnavigation would throw at it. And so I'm kind of focused on that airplane I'm sure I can fly a faster plane or a more sophisticated airplane. But let me tell you when that DC three flies in, she's a head turner. She is an icon. She has a reputation. It's like, it's like watching the grand Dom of aviation come to your town. It is it in itself is a spectacle. Forget the project in itself is a spectacle. So I wanted that because I thought that that is a that's the kind of airplane number one that will take me through this circumnavigation safely and secondarily will elicit a positive response from everyone that sees are flying in. Now, having said all that, that's until they find out it's a gay plane. Yeah, you know,

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I mean, to be fair, to be fair, though, it's big. It's loud and it's impossible to ignore. I mean, much like the gay community all together, so that's a

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good point. Good point. And and I struggled with the livery. So livery is the term they use for the paint scheme of an airplane. So I am going to have some rainbow colors on the wings and on the tail. They'll be subtle, but they'll be there. Yeah. Because you know, you don't want to fly into by rain and then slap them in the face with your randoms. You know what I mean? But I do want it to be recognizable. And I do want to make a statement. This is, you know, this is an aviation project. It's a human endeavor. It's a human achievement, but it is also a gay project. I'm a gay pilot, promoting goodwill, and education about the gay community. You know, a lot of people think, Oh, you know, we have it so good here in the United States, because now especially, you know, we can be out and about and be proud and, and there's some repercussions yet we still have a ways to go. But as a general rule, we know we cannot be out and proud. But some countries you can be killed or lose your job or lose your family or whatever. So I want to go out and say, Hey, we're not part of this sliver of the community. We're part of the Actual fabric of the global community and we contribute to global achievements, whether it's in sports, aviation, finance, business, politics. I mean, there's a reason why I think it's important that there are first, you know, people say, Well, why, you know, I'm sure there were gay pilots who flew Yes, there were but they were closeted.

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Yeah. So know that yeah.

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So why is it important, say the first National Football League quarterback, or the first gay swimmer? Or the first gay kiss between skiers? Yeah, what the first gay politician? You know, Harvey Milk. That was really out there. Yeah. Or, you know, now we have a we actually have a presidential candidate that is gay, openly gay, and nobody's like, killing him.

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I'm sure he has threats and whatever. But

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we talk about this because it matters

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because it matters. It matters to be first to show that we are part of every facet of life. We're not just on holiday. dead or in our communities like it used to be, you know, it's like, oh, they're over there. We never go there. But yeah, you know, they're they're not out here. You know, they're not in our churches. They're not in our schools. They're not in our businesses. They're in over there. Yeah. And but now, we're in a different time. And so now it's important for us to say, Hey, we're everywhere. We are in your churches, we are in your businesses. We are political leaders. We are achievers. Yeah, we're at athletes were adventurers were scientists were this and that and everything else in between. That's why it's important. It's not just that it's Hey, look at us. I'm doing this fabulous flight around the world. It is not like that pride flight is not about that pride flight really is about being proud of being gay. I'm a pilot. I'm proud of what I can achieve because of my skill.

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Yeah, period. And one thing I did want to bring up since we're on this side jack, like a tiny thing came across, you know, it was big news when Taiwan had their legalization of same sex marriage. And then, you know, a few months later, it was pride time. And so I was in. I was in Chicago. I've never been to a pride parade, by the way. And so the one yeah, I haven't I just I don't know. It's just like, wherever I was, it was just never came up. And I haven't you know, I didn't come out into my early 20s. So I haven't been out for very long but out long enough, and I just I don't know, I never came across one and it wasn't ever convenient for me anyway.

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But anyway, probably wasn't never can be pride was convenient because

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it was, first of all, when I lived in Jersey, it was a little bit far from where I wanted to be. They only had like two major ones and also the, you know, the queer community ain't they ain't the best over there. Now that have nothing against

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that surprising it's just

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anytime I was in that community, it was there was always something that made me feel singled out, you know? I was usually only the colored one or I was the only one under 30. Or I was the only one who is who is an out trans woman in some of these, you know, in some of these groups, and it just felt, I don't know, man every single time I would look around and I'm like, I want to say that I'm like you, but a lot of the times I don't get treated that way. Then I come to Chicago and it's completely different. Right? And so there's a there's a lot of color trans people, but anyway, yeah, like I was saying, I go to the Pride Parade that was in Chicago, and, you know, they like they, there was a group of Taiwanese people holding a Taiwan flag, and everyone went nuts. And I'm like, it made me feel great, because I'm like, Yes, Fuck yes, man. This is something they fought for. This is something they wanted and they got it and it's amazing. share the news, and so that it has the same

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spirit of what you're talking about. This is what I envisioned for pre flight. And this is another thing to it is a personal journey for me as well. You know, it's coming to terms with standing up for who I am and sort of always keeping it on the back burner, being out there in a public way, a very public way, and say, Okay, I'm a gay pilot, and I'm going to do this, I'm going to try to do this. And, and I was telling a publisher friend of mine, I said, You know, I don't know what kind of support I'll get from the gay community, because this is outside the norm of what they support. You know, I don't have a six pack. I'm not young, you know, I don't have a thick head of hair. I'm all the things that that the internet and social media do not celebrate.

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At least not at this point. I mean, it's not not this

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point. And that's one of the things to that I want to I want to really emphasize is that I want I want to be representative of what's more about our community than just what that small segment is. And and there are a lot more people a lot more people I think, like me out there than there are those that you see on social media, you know, and and what have you so so this project is First and foremost, it's a feat of aviation. Whether you're gay, straight, male, female, and everything in between it is fundamentally a feat of aviation. Whoever the pilot is, it's a feat of aviation. Secondarily, it is a human endeavor. Because this airplane is not. It's not like an airline, you know, not going to be serving cocktails. It first of all, it rattles and shakes, it's extremely loud. It's like, think about 100, Harley davidsons or revving their engines. That's what it sounds like, even with a headset on, and it's not pressurized. So we can't fly higher than 10 or 11,000 feet for any extended period of time. So we don't go over mountains, we have to go around mountains. And if we're flying over oceans, if God forbid, there's an engine problem or catastrophic mechanical failure, and we have to ditch we have precious few minutes to determine what we're going to do, how we're going to do it and get ready to do it and then if we survive the ditching and The ocean now we're in the middle of the North Atlantic on the first part or the Northern Pacific on the second part. Not exactly. Bora Bora. Do you know what I mean? So it's very dangerous. And the, you know, another consideration is because we're a gay crew will be a gay project, we're going to be flying into countries where LGBT people are persecuted, if not killed, or what, or anything else in between. So there may be countries that number one refuse to let us land if they know that we're a gay plane. And if and that's the least threatening one. The other one could be, they refuse to give us fuel, they refuse to give us services, or they shoot at us some crazy shoots at us because we're low and slow. And so as we're landing into an airport in a hostile area, you know, someone says, Oh, that's that gay plane. I'm just gonna blow them out of the sky or I'm gonna shoot my rifle because the DC three flies low insulin. So an easy target for someone to just sit there and it's not like it's steel plated, flying long Lalalalalala you're focusing on landing this, you know, bullets are coming through the bottom of the plane. Very, very dangerous. And then the the last part, and I think the biggest challenge is we don't get the support of the local governments. So we don't get protection. Somebody sabotage is the plane, someone that doesn't like, you know, what have you sabotage the plane. So we have a lot of challenges beyond just the aviation aspect that we're trying to mitigate. And I don't think we're going to address all of them trying to mitigate it. So so what I say to people when they say, Why are you doing this, I'm saying it's first it's a feat of aviation. Second, it's a it's a human endeavor to overcome a challenge. And, and, and that's the big part of it. And then the third thing, and I think the they're all equally important, but the third thing is it is a triumph. of a education to demonstrate that we are part of the greater fabric of the global community and that we contribute to human achievement, not just, Hey, what do you bring to the table? Oh, I go to the bars, I get laid, and we have an open relationship. And I drink and I do this and do that. And it's xx, know, we're much more than that a lot more than that. And so, you know, our society and our culture as a whole is a collection of human achievements, individuals, you human achievements, I want to demonstrate that we as a community are also part of that collective human achievement, whether it's being the first you know, gay quarterback, or etc, etc, etc. We all contribute our piece to the puzzle. It's not just it's not just being gay as we're sexually focused and partiers or anything. we're much more than that.

37:56

To be fair in this day and age. I don't think they they they think that anymore. And to the public. I mean, dude, we have look at Apple, the CEO is gay.

38:05

Yeah, I But see, I don't agree with that because guess those are our exceptions to the rule. I think as a general rule, all you do is go to Indiana go to Indianapolis Yeah. Tell me that. I'm going to tell you that most of the people there in that community believe that gay people are just sexual deviant bone to hell, not Christian, not Christian or anything like that. And so they're still out there. In Chicago, it's very easy to believe that, hey, you know, we all believe in the diversity of our community. But there are many, many, many, many places in this country and outside of this country.

38:41

Speak to me. Yeah, I'm piles of marginalized kinds of things.

38:46

Me I know, I know, I'm just as I but that's what I'm saying is when you make a statement, like oh, no, you know, in this day and age, there's still a big fight to have and forget people like you. You have a bigger fight in a much more stable And focus area. So you could say, oh, as a gay man, you have the easiest part of the fight. Right? Because you're right. We are we are mainstream now, aren't we?

39:10

Right? It's a little bit easier. Yeah.

39:12

Yeah. So what I'm saying is as easy as it is, Mm hmm. We still have that. Leave this country. It's where it gets worse. Yeah. Except for Europe and Europe. You know, I think it's better here in there, here and there. But I mean, so my, the whole point I'm trying to make is that this flight is about, it's about taking that community and, and saying to those people that may have those feelings that way. You might not like, like a transgender person. You may not like a gay person, but they are part of your community. And they're, and they're more than just what you think they are true. They're more than that. And I think that is the thing that drives me. It's I don't want people to focus on the fact of He's gay, I wanted them to focus on the fact that he is a human being achieving a goal who happens to be gay?

40:09

Yeah, I agree with that.

40:10

And, and in my ultimate utopia, that's all that would really matter. It wouldn't matter whether you're gay, straight, lesbian, transgender, binary, non binary, and everything in between wouldn't matter. What matters is as a human being, how do you how do you act? What do you contribute to society? What do you contribute to a relationship etc. And I that's a very unlikely position for me to be and I never thought I would be in that position to even have the ability to have a potential impact. Mm hmm. And it scares the shit out of me. Because I am not the ambassador. I am not that person. I am not the activist as a general rule, I didn't grow up that way. I didn't live my life that way. Yet, here I am in this position and if I do this flight, and It's a big if but if I do this flight, then all of a sudden, I'm going to find myself in a position of being a very public ambassador for our community, which is something I've never done before. True anyway. So that's why pride flight is in is important. I think it's important to me, and I'm going to try it. And I'm scared out of my width on multiple levels, I'm scared that I'm gonna die. I'm scared that I'm gonna fail. I'm scared that I'm, I'm going to be ridiculed. I'm scared about just not having the ability to do it, because I'm getting older. And this is going to be a an endurance challenge for a younger person, let alone someone who's going to be 60 soon. And so you know, I know. And I have diabetes. Yep. You know, so what happens? I mean, I'm nervous about all of those things yet. I am still moving forward. That's the way to do it. So anyway, that's what it is. So, you know, we're going to take a little bit of break, take a break, and when we come back, we're going to finish talking about pride flight. We're gonna talk about flying a little bit and and We'll close out the show will close out the show. Yeah, you know, it's not so bad. I mean, I was a little bit nervous about having to re record it. But yeah, a lot of things came flowing back. So

42:09

yeah,

42:09

so anyway, you're listening to the DJ Doran show. Don't go anywhere. We'll be right back.

42:14

You're listening to the DJ Doran show. Don't go away. We'll be right back. Call 312-235-2281 to speak the DJ

43:21

Alright, well we're back. You're listening to the DJ Doran show. And I'm a Are you here? Can you hear me right? Yeah, they do it right. Yeah, this should be off that should be off okay. All right technical shit man. So many buttons to push. And I'm a pilot no no it's like I got everything spread out and I'm I got frazzled when that's the show we did prior didn't work out. So now I'm not walking on eggshells. I'm not in that flow anymore. So you know what, I'm not really thrilled about it. So we've been talking about pride flight. My bid to fly a world war two era DC three around the world on a goodwill mission. No political agenda knows that. Brings back to another point someone asked me Well, well, are you going to deliver HIV drugs? And are you going to do this? And you're going to do that? And I said, No, I'm not. And they were like, Oh my God, why not? There's a reason why. I don't want to have any political agenda. No hot button issues. I don't want to have any controversy. Where country says we're not going to let you land because you're carrying prep.

44:20

Yeah, you know what I mean? Also, carrying drugs is probably worth carrying significantly more.

44:24

Right? So um, so I want to take all of that out of the equation and just make this about aviation. Make this about human beings. You know, we're gonna have a pretty diverse crew. And I don't know if I told you but we have a transgender a&p mechanic. So ANP stands for airframe and powerplant. She's a very talented mechanic, and there's a story that goes with that, too. When she first applied for the job. She was so nervous, and she was telling me that she was transgender and I couldn't really tell by her voice on the phone. So I invited her come to a planning meeting. So there was a knock at the door and I said come in, but nobody came in. And so I go out there and I look and I see this really tall guy, and he looked like a guy, right? Like, he looked like a guy. And I opened the door and, and he goes, Hi, I'm Tasha. And of course, when I shook his hand, see, he wanted me to call him him. His pronoun, so I, I did that. But he had nail polish, okay, on his fingernails. So, and he was really nervous. Now I can tell when I shook his hand, it was all sweaty. So I walk, walk outside, and I said, I said, Listen, I kept calling him Tosh up because that's how he originally introduced herself. Yes. But what he showed up was was his male version, because he was like, he, I guess he thought that that would make a better impression. So I said, Tasha, listen to me. I said, Are you good mechanic? She goes, yes. And I said, Can you turn a wrench, which is the term a mechanic uses and he goes, yes. And I said, then I don't give a I don't give a shit, whoever, however you show up, be who you are, be comfortable. And I said, and I don't think anybody else is going to is going to really care either. So I said, as far as I'm concerned, you introduce yourself as Tasha, if that's how you want me to introduce you to the crew, I will introduce you, however you want me whatever pronoun you want me to use. And, and so he goes, at that point, he goes, Okay, I want you to introduce me as Tasha. I said, Okay, I will introduce you as Tasha. So she came in the house, and it was funny because I'm a big person. I'm a big guy, like pretty muscular guy. She is bigger and more muscular. Right? And I was like, What does she have to worry about? She could beat up everyone in this room. Right? But she was really nervous. So she goes into living room and I introduced her as Tasha. And yet I didn't notice it at first because it was dark out but yet I eyeliner on, like what do you put on your eyelids? Oh I shadow I shadow. She had a eyeshadow on and her nails were painted. And so I'm sits on the couch and they start talking and I'm keep an ear open to see if there's any controversy, right? Because I don't want anything like that in my, in my house. But I knew these people I knew that wouldn't be but just in case, right because Tasha didn't present as a feminine transgender woman. So I thought maybe there might be some conflict, right. But as many times as I fucked up your pronoun. It's like, I thank God, you're your

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patient, but very much so. Yes,

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but I try. But the literally I'm an old dog that is trying to learn a new trick. Yeah. And so I was in the kitchen. I was making something and getting pizza ready because I ordered pizza for everyone. I get pizza ready, and I look in and I'm like, I don't hear anything. And what do you think I saw

47:51

something?

47:52

Yeah. I saw all these people in the living room. Talking about airplanes.

48:00

Not one person gave two shits about her being transgender. And from that moment on, I'm like, this is exactly what I get goosebumps remembering that from that moment on, I realized that this is what pride flight is about, fundamentally, is what it's about. Yes. It's not about labels. It's not about anything. It's not about ideologies. It's not about any of that. It's about human beings interacting. And afterwards, she was had had a great time. She had a wonderful time. And afterwards, everybody said their goodbyes, and she left and she, I went to shake her hand and she hugged me and she said, Thank you. And from that point on, she's part of our crew. Now she's had some issues with the drug, she's taking the hormones and made her hear voices. And apparently, from her words to me, the transgender community in Indianapolis was not very kind to her because she, she I guess she didn't project what they expected her to project. They just heard they were just being mean, they just being me. I don't know what that so and he and she didn't know how to deal with it. So she went back to being a man, huh? So now she's a man. He's a man right now. And, but like I told him even then I said, I still don't give a shit as long as you work on the airplane. That's all I care about. And so, uh, but she was like the first person that I I met that I knew not to get into a separate issue, but in this particular case, she's the first person I knew that was transgender, that I knew. It was legitimate. Like she was a woman in a man's body literally. tortured. Hmm,

49:41

yeah. So it feels like

49:42

but a lot of times I've met people that I didn't feel like I didn't feel that like I never felt that I always thought Oh, they're dressing up in whatever agenda they want to be, you know, but it's not I don't care. But it didn't it didn't feel it didn't sink in it but her go talking to her and taking the time to talk to her and really understanding and listening to her reality that sunk in that connected with me and I. I was like, I didn't I never knew that I never knew that.

50:17

What I said yes being transects

50:19

Well, I never knew that there was like a torture that went to it. Like I always thought that oh, you know, it's, it's the flavor of the month to be trans. You know, it's like, you know, but when I met her, I was like, This is not a flavor of the month this is someone who was literally in the wrong body who however it happened, whether it was God or this or that or whatever you want to believe she was in the wrong body. Yes. And, and she wasn't really an attractive woman. She was a barely attractive man. And so by, by society standards, haha. So my thought was how to Someone you know, because like, I don't think I'm an attractive person by today's standards just like average right? Sure. So you have all the societal standards that say oh, you have to have a six pack abs you have to have full wavy hair and perfect white straight teeth and muscles and big pacsun calves and whatever. I'm none of that. Right? So that's what society pushes on you. So you always feel like you're a failure. What is it like when you're in a in the wrong body? And you like I heard I meet I met somebody no can quit a transgender thing was transgender. I don't know. But she was a male at presenting as a woman, and she was beautiful. I would never have known. Never have no.

51:48

Do you see what I'm saying? I do loud and clear. Yes.

51:50

So what happens when you're when you're like that? I think it's easier, don't you?

51:54

I hear you're legitimately asking me because I can I can educate you.

51:58

Well, I'm just saying is like You're a good looking. If you are a male and you you're presenting as a woman and you're a good looking woman, I would think it would be easier.

52:09

Well, okay, all right, hold on, hold on, hold on. Let's, let's unpack that real quick.

52:15

met up just so you know, ladies and gentlemen, I ordered food and I just want to make sure

52:21

that it arrives.

52:23

So real quick, real quick, okay. Sure. If you're not, you know, if you are very binary, so if you present as male or if you present as female, sure, there are certain classifications or certain things that people are very, you know, uptight about because of how society portrays beauty, but also in our society, especially in this country. A lot of the times beauty tends to be portrayed in a sense of color as well. I mean, when I was when I was, you know, coming out of trans and I was really coming into my own and I was trying to find role models. I couldn't find any. I couldn't find any women with my hair. I couldn't find any even six women. I couldn't find magazines with models that had my colored skin that were as tall as me that were, you know, as as outspoken as me. And, you know, none of them are glasses. So I'm like, I was trying to find my own damn sense of fashion and beauty when I had no direction, because that's just how society like wanted it. And so I ditched that a long time ago. So when you're trans and you have a completely different perspective on these kinds of things, you understand beauty in a completely different light.

53:39

I can't I listen, I'm grateful. I don't have to deal with that. Yes, good for you. And I just but my, my thought is, is for her. My heart ached for her. Because Did you ever see the movie? The World According to Garp? No. Well, john Lithgow was a champion. Gender woman in that movie and I, I just thought that when she presented herself as a woman by societal standards short people would comment negatively. And, and and what my thought was is, how can you deal with all of the baggage that comes with being transgender in itself? And all of the challenges that come with it? And then on top of that have to deal with

54:26

I can tell you I have many first hand accounts friend.

54:30

Yeah, but you're good looking, john.

54:32

No, not so society may not even close. That's just how it works. Man at listen.

54:38

All right. Yeah. No, you I'm just telling you, you're a good looking woman.

54:41

Why thank you. If only everybody shared that sentiment, but they don't. They don't.

54:46

But you don't. Listen. I am not

54:49

like no, no, but we're not talking about we're talking we're not talking about what's attractive. What's not we're talking about how it is to feel attractive when you're trans. That's that's a completely different, different thing. I know. I'm I feel attractive. But no one takes me seriously as a woman ever. I am always, always overshadowed in that way, and I didn't really don't get it. But I mean, cuz I see myself in a certain light. But I, when we talk about Tasha, and I'm like, I'm thinking to myself, yeah, you know, maybe there's some circumstances where it's never gonna work out well for her. But that doesn't have to be all that there is, you know, yes, you're tortured by being trans. But you also have to remember, I mean, coming to your own is a completely different fight than being accepted.

55:30

You know, I was proud of myself because I gave some really good advice, even though I was ignorant about it, you know, but I said to her, I said, the only thing I can tell you and I don't know anything, because my mom when I came out, I was really confused. I was like, I had two lives for like, 20 years. Sure. And I was like, Mom, I don't know how to reconcile and be one person. I don't know how to be gay. I didn't even come out. I was almost 40 For God's sake. Right. So I was like, I don't have any history. I'd never had that time. I'd never been to a gay bar. I've never been a gay pride. I've never been gay community. I never knew too many other gay people except who I met through AOL for sex. And I didn't have any of that experience. And in her wisdom, she said to me, she said, Well, I don't really know how to tell you to be a good gay person. But I will give you this piece of advice. If you focus on being a good human being, then everything You are everything you do, everything you're involved in, will be filtered through that. And I'm telling you, Rachel, that saves my life. That was the thing that held on to me when I didn't know what to do. I said, I want to be a good person. I want to be a good human being. And so I had an opportunity to share that with Tosh and I said, Listen, that's where your focus is, no matter what struggles you're going through, focus on your fundamentally You are the biggest common denominator is your human being. So focus on that. Focus on being good at that and everything else will fall into place. I think it helped her. But it it really taught me a lesson about authenticity. It taught me a lesson about being, having personal integrity about who you are, and what you stand for. Right now, this is really serious. Now, I didn't really mean to get into this, but I'm just telling you is pride flight to me is about that. It is about is it is about being who you are standing for what you are in a public way, demonstrating that no, I'm not just going to be in the shadows. I'm not going to be behind in the curtains, I am going to be out there. out front. Yeah, doing that. And so and I'm going to be, you know, and I'm using my skill set, as a pilot as an experienced pilot to demonstrate that, and I'd never done it before. Never. And so I'm telling all of you that are listening. This is brand new territory. This is why I mean, it's almost like coming out again, but in a much public, much more public fashion. So on that note, that's a whole other show. We can have a show on that. And it's interesting. And I didn't mean to segue into that. But that is an important part of it because her being part of price flight was, first of all an education for me. It was a push against my comfort zone of what I was used to. It was scary for her to put herself out there and to to say, Hey, I love aviation. I want to be part of this project, but this is my reality. But she did it anyway. And that's what I told her and we're still friends to this day. So I'm sorry she's stuck in Indianapolis, but that's also another whole other show. So anyway, you look pretty good show right now. So not bad. I think we have it. I think we have it dialed in better now. So we now know the importance of having a show checklist to double check. So you've been listening to the DJ Doran show you know you can find us on Apple podcast, Google podcasts and Stitcher SoundCloud pod automatic and a few other places in between anywhere that any any major podcasting source, you could find the DJ Doran show I hope you'll give us a listen and follow us. You can also find us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and our website is DJ Doran. DJ Doran calm. I don't even know my own name. DJ Doran calm. We're still getting the website up and running. But you can you can go there and you can follow us there. So hopefully you will, until we get together next time. Have a wonderful evening. I'm DJ, your host and I am Rachel and we'll see you next week. Have a wonderful evening. Bye.

59:29

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